What's Happening In And About The Yankee Air Force Museum
Hangar Happenin's

Jan
1999

YANKEE AIR FORCE

Yankee Air Museum P.O. Box 590 Belleville, MI 48112 Tel. (734) 483 – 4030

Hangar Happenin's
Is a monthly newsletter
For the Yankee Air Force

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Vice-Pres: John Day
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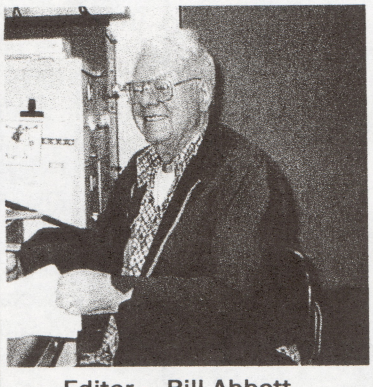
Meeting Schedule
1st Wednesday of Month – 7:30 PM
General Membership
3rd Wednesday of Month – 7:30 PM
Board Meeting
Public Welcome



Editor – Bill Abbott

From the Editors' Desk:

Well, here we are into another year! We hope everyone had a safe and happy holiday season.

This will be the second issue of the newsletter that has gone to every Yankee member. Once again we will do our very best to keep all of you up to date on what is going on. We had several comments on the length of some of the articles in the past couple of issues. One of these was submitted by a professional author and the second by a member. It is hard to turn away this type of piece, especially in the winter, but also because it is rather special that your newsletter was asked to publish this material. We will continue to print this type of piece; but rest assured we still consider ourselves to be a newsletter. We hope you understand that because of a lack of news during the winter months, if something good comes along we will print it.

Well, enough of the "soap box." You have probably noticed our new look. We hope you like it and, of course, welcome your comments. Once again, let us remind you that if you have an interesting story or something that may be of interest to the members, please send it to us. When more people help with the writing, it makes our jobs easier and the newsletter more interesting for everyone.

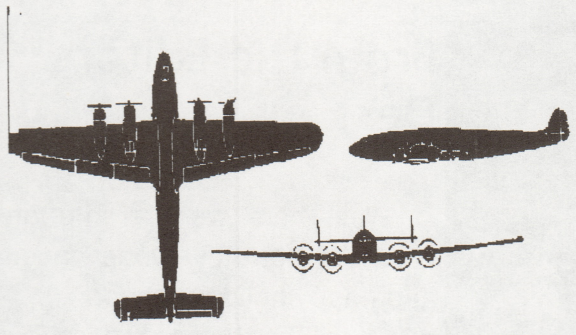
Keep the faith that winter will be over soon, and the flying season can begin. This will bring more stories to tell and pictures to see, thanks to our new camera, and we hope that we keep meeting your expectations. If we do something you don't like, let us know.

The HH Staff

Our internet address is:
http://www.yankeeairmuseum.org
Our e-mail address is:
yankeeairmuseum@provide.net

Hangar Happenin's e-mail address is:
seaton@provide.net

What kind of plane is this?



Visitors to the Museum
December 1998
11 states and Germany
(As of 12/12/98)

Past Dates of Interest

2 Jan 1942	8th AF established by Gen H H "Hap" Arnold
6 Jan 1944	Maj Gen James Doolittle assumed 8th AF command
16 Jan 1991	*Desert Shield* became *Desert Storm*
20 Jan 1988	100th and last B-1B manufactured
25 Jan 1949	USAF adopted blue uniform
26 Jan 1967	Astronauts Grissom, Chafee, & White killed in Apollo I fire

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Winner of the December meeting 50/50 drawing was

GEORGE WHITFIELD

From The Head -- Office, That Is.
by **Bill Hanney**

We had a great '98' and expect a mighty fine '99'.

Merry Christmas! By the time that you read this, Christmas will have come and gone, and my greetings are belated. If that sounds confusing, it's due to the fact that I have to write this in early December to meet the deadline for publication.

I would like to thank the entire membership of the Yankee Air Force for my election as President. I will do my best to support your belief in me.

We have been making plans for a vastly enlarged and improved museum. I certainly hope to see movement on this project this year, perhaps a ground breaking. We have a lot of work to do in getting approvals and acquiring the financing for our first building.

Additionally, we are working on getting our education program started. Bette Watson has conducted the first program with a kindergarten class and we will be moving forward and up into higher grades shortly.

We definitely need your help in making this all happen. Please let us know if you have a spare million or so dollars. If you don't, we can use help in all aspects of operating the museum. We need help on the tour desk, retail sales, catalog sales (soon, we hope), hangar restoration and upkeep, kitchen help janitorial help–You name it!

I hope that this shot at a Presidential memo hasn't been too long or boring. I'll be continuing to ask for help. Lord knows, I need it!

Before I close, I'd like to get off a few "Thank yous". Thanks to Don Harner, true gentleman and a great leader as president. To Nancy Lockwood for keeping our bucks straight. To John Day for his efforts on the hangar. To Mary-Jane Medlock for volunteering for the job of Secretary when I became VP. To the Board for helping govern this operation. I can't name everybody in this space, but I want to thank everybody. I'll try to include more names next issue– Not in order of importance, but as my recollection of events pops them up.

Last words for this time. Let's all remember Don's predecessor, Frank Modlinski. A true friend and a valuable asset to the YAF. He served the YAF from the beginning as a founder, board member, Vice President and President until his untimely death. We will never be able to board the B-17, or even look at it without seeing his craftsmanship. Thanks Dee, for allowing us to borrow his time and talent.

WAR STORIES

Robert H. Graham, Charter Member and Senior Life Member, YAF #0400. USMC, 1939-1944. US Army Reserves and Retired Reserves, 1949-1971.

I joined the Marines in 1939 after seeing the movie "*The Singing Marine*" with Dick Powell. I lived in Highland Park, Michigan, at the time. I tried to talk Bob Wenzel (now YAF #0071) into joining with me but he wouldn't go! He later joined the Air Corps. The Marines turned out to be not much like the movie.

I did boot camp at Quantico, Virginia. A hurricane had torn up Parris Island so we didn't go there like most Marines do. The Marines gave me a medical discharge in 1944. I had contracted all the known tropical diseases and some that were not known. They wanted me back a year later; but I had gotten married and the Marines, at that time, did not take married men. I joined the US Army Reserves in Texas in 1949, was commissioned, and retired from the Army Retired Reserves in 1971.

Before the outbreak of World War II, I was a charter member of the 1st Marine Division, 7th Marines. This division was formed from the 1st Marine Brigade at Guantanamo Bay, Cuba, in February 1941. Our unit of the 1st Division sailed for the South Pacific in early 1942. After some short stays at other Pacific Islands, we went to Guadalcanal in the Solomon Islands.

Many perilous things happened during the five months there but most of the bad times have been erased from my mind by Father Time. One event, however, was so fearsome that I have never forgotten it.

The night of October 13-14, 1942, our small perimeter was shelled by two Japanese battleships for 2-1/2 hours. We became the first US troops in history to be shelled by 14- and 16-inch guns. We had no protection except our foxholes or gun pits. All I could do was curl up as small and close to the dirt as possible, hug my steel pot, and hope the next one didn't land on me.

They were using star shells in addition to the more regular steel ordnance. Star shells burst in the air throwing out smaller shells that have an incendiary core. The next morning when we could see the debris, shrapnel and spent star shells lying everywhere, it seemed like a miracle that any of us there survived that night. We actually suffered very few casualties.

Anyone who has never been through a shelling like that cannot begin to comprehend its violence and terror—the noise of the continuous explosions combined with the sizzle and pop of flying shrapnel, the dirt and debris falling on you, the shaking of the ground.

Very few of our aircraft survived that shelling. Had the Japanese made a landing on the beach at our perimeter, they probably would have been successful. For reasons I'll never understand, they landed far to the west of our beachhead, slogging through many miles of jungle before reaching a point to the rear of us. By that time, we were able to reorganize much of our defenses.

There, at Bloody Ridge, they tried to smash through us to the airfield. They didn't make it, thanks to some great Marines like Sgt. John Basilone, who won a Medal of Honor in that battle, and our commander, Lt. Col. Chesty Puller. (Puller eventually became a Lieutenant General

and the most decorated Marine in the Corps, earning five Navy Crosses among his awards. — *Editor*)

We had about 600 Marines, and later some US Army reinforcements, at this location. I don't know how many Japanese began the attack on the ridge; but when the next two days of fighting were over, we found over 2,000 Japanese bodies. After 56-plus years, that night's shelling still lives in my nightmares. *

* *Editor's note*: The practice of shelling an enemy's position prior to an assault has been standard military practice since the invention of artillery. The idea is to "soften up" the enemy position by destroying facilities and equipment, tearing up the terrain, and terrorizing the troops.

Infantrymen who undergo such an ordeal can lose their combat edge because they are so emotionally traumatized and deafened, if not killed or maimed. Aside from the noise and ground shake, they are pelted by hot shrapnel, dirt, rocks, and body parts of their comrades. Some men simply collapse mentally and emotionally under the ordeal. Now called "battle fatigue," in the First World War it was called "shell shock."

A naval artillery barrage is one of the most devastating of all because of the size of the guns. A single 16-inch artillery projectile can contain well over a ton of steel and high explosive.
Edited by – JIM BECK

WHAT'S HAPPENING IN THE HANGAR by Daniel Tomczak

OMNIPOINT HANGAR PARTY

On November 6, the Yankee Air Force Museum's huge hangar was transformed into a celebration at a World War II English airbase. It looked right out of the movies. There was a stage that held a big band. In front there was a dance floor where swing dancers could be seen. Refreshment and food tables (although SPAM could not be found) were set up on oil drums. A martini pub, a briefing /debriefing room, and our B-17 lined the walls. Even the City of London could be seen in the distance with search lights looking for enemy aircraft. Outside of the hangar there were military vehicles, a guard tower, checkpoint barrier, and lighted aircraft.

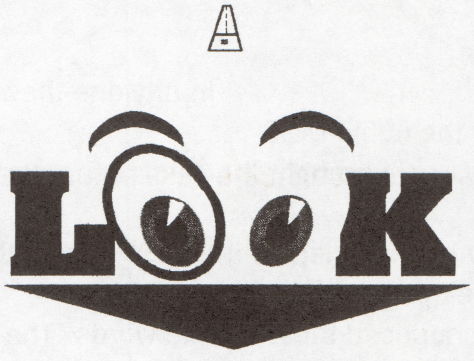
The party was sponsored by **Omnipoint Communications. Omnipoint** is a new cellular phone company and they wanted someplace special for their kick-off celebration. They chose the large World War II hangar of the Yankee Air Force Museum. The transformation of the hangar started a week before the party with the clearing of aircraft and displays from the hangar. Then the set-up crew of 20-30 people arrived on Monday and took over the hangar.

The first thing done Monday was the machine scrubbing of the floor. Also **Fantsee Lighting** started to position the lighting framework on the floor. People went up into the rafters to place the hanging straps. Tuesday the stage, dance floor, and lighting framework was set up, and the B-17 was moved into position. Tuesday also saw the arrival of the generators from **Detroit Power and Light** that would supply all the needed electricity. Also two one-million-BTU hot air heaters arrived from **Caterpillar Equipment Co.** Wednesday saw the addition of the Briefing Room (which was to be used as the coat room for the guests), a large black drape along the south wall, a wooden bar, the City of London back drop, and about 100 lights that would light up the hangar. The area outside of the hangar was also changing with the addition of lights, guard tower, checkpoint barrier, and many accessories. By Thursday the hangar was looking quite different with the addition of drapes, parachutes, camouflage netting, and many accessories and items to make the hangar look like a scene

from W.W.II. A very large white screen was placed behind the B-17 to display various pictures from W.W.II, and a cloudy blue sky. Tables and chairs were brought in for the guests. The wardrobe department had set up in the briefing room. A rehearsal occurred late in the evening. Here the professional dancers practiced their routine, the band checked their sound, and the lighting crew made sure that everything was ready.

On Friday, the day of the big event, the set-up crew scrambled to finish the many last minute details. There was a press conference at noon in front of the B-17 which included the first official phone call over **Omnipoint's** network. The call was answered in London, England and played over the sound system. It sure sounded clear and crisp. Then it was back to work for the set-up crew. By 6:00 PM everything was finished awaiting the 400 guests. When the black-tie-attired guests arrived they were treated to a fantastic experience. The first thing they saw was the rows of aircraft and several military vehicles all brilliantly lighted. The valet parking attendants were all dressed in army uniforms. Upon entering the warm hangar (that's right I said HEATED), the guests were treated to the sight of a B-17 at an English airbase. For added atmosphere, all of the waitstaff were dressed in World War II uniforms, the 17-piece band was dressed in white jackets. There were several characters who walked around. They included the likes of Mae West, a cigarette girl (who had gum and small wooden gliders), an English Gentleman who looked like Winston Churchill, and a gangster dressed in a zoot suit. There was plenty of food, music, dancing, and atmosphere. A great time was had by all. The event was a great success for Omnipoint, the Marine Corps who collected "Toys for Tots" and for the Yankee Air Force Museum. The party ended about midnight with the set-up crew leaving about 1:30 in the morning.

Saturday morning the stage crew arrived again and started the long task of tearing down all of their set-up. By 5 PM the crew was finished and the hangar was turned back into our Museum. On Sunday, the hangar displays were set up again, the aircraft moved back in the hangar and things started to get back to normal.



The gift shop has beautiful copies of the "*Yankee Lady*" photos taken in July 1998 by John Dibbs of the Plane Picture Co. There are 8 examples, some with accompanying P-51 Mustangs in formation, and others with just the "*Lady*."

16" x 20" $8 each
9" x 12" $3 each

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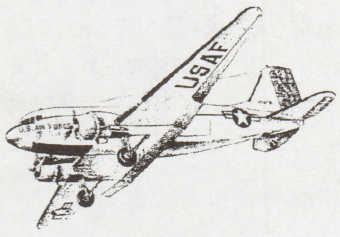
BAMBI UPDATE

In last month's issue, it was reported that Irv Kaminski hit a deer on Belleville Road after leaving the monthly meeting. I don't know who Irv knows, or how much pull he has, but all the trees and brush in that section of Belleville road has been removed. (Actually, it is due to the preparation to widen Belleville Road from the Ford dealership south to *McDonald's*.)

by **Don Burke**



TRIBUTE TO THE *DC-3*

In fifty-one they tried to ground the noble DC-3
Some lawyers brought the case before the mighty C.A.B.
The board examined all the facts behind their great oak portal
And pronounced these simple words "The Gooney Bird's Immortal!"

The Air Corps toast their Sky Train in lousy scotch and soda
The Tommies raise their glasses high to cheer their old Dakota
Some claim the C-47's best, or the gallant R4D
Forget that claim, they're all the same, they're the noble DC-3.

Douglas built the ship to last, but nobody expected
This crazy heap would fly and fly, no matter how they wrecked it
While nations fall and men retire, and jets go obsolete
The Gooney Bird flies on and on at seven thousand feet.

No matter what they did to her the Gooney Bird still flies
One crippled plane was fitted out with one wing half the size
She hunched her shoulders then took off (I know this makes you laugh)
One wing askew, and yet she flew, the DC-2 and a half.

She had her faults, but after all, who's perfect in every sphere?
Her heating system was a gem, we loved her for her gear
Of course the windows leaked a bit when the rain came pouring down
She'd keep you warm, but in a storm, it's possible you'd drown.

Well now she flies the feeder lines and carries all the freight
She's just an airborne office, a flying twelve-ton crate
They patched her up with "duck" tape, with paper clips and strings
And still she flies, she never dies, Methuselah with wings.

- *Anonymous*

The following is a short review of a book set in the period after the Vietnam War. A local author from Ann Arbor wrote the book. A member recommended this, and it not intended to be an advertisement for the piece or a solicitation of your business.

Yellow Garden by *J.J. Van Gasse*

Wars never really end. The combat may cease with the victors in jubilation and the defeated in despair, treaties may be signed, and boundaries redrawn along with the many other vestiges of armed conflict, but the war itself never truly ends. Reverberations that come when masses of people strive to kill other masses of people spread like ripples in an ocean without shores.

The war in Vietnam was but one of a long, long list of such wars. Not all the American soldiers left behind in the exotic lands of Southeast Asia are dead. Like Ken Green, for instance.

Ken's twin sister, Kendra, lies hospitalized as she slowly dies of a rare strain of leukemia, and only a bone marrow transplant from her brother offers any chance of saving her life. But finding her

brother will be a very difficult task – he's presumed dead since missing in action, another unaccounted victim of the Vietnam War. But vague rumors of a renegade American living in the remote jungles in Northern Thailand persist. Was he left behind or did he choose to stay behind because of unresolved personal and political conflicts with his father thirty years prior? And is he involved in and responsible for the massive amount of heroin produced in Asia and exported to the States?

The man sent to find him, pharmaceutical executive Dr. Mikhail Osten, has two very personal stakes in finding Ken Green: he is an old and trusted friend of Ken's father, and he is in love with Kendra.

Yellow Garden may be ordered through Proctor Publication by calling 800-343-3034 or 734-480-9900. Members of the Yankee Air Force will receive a 25% discount.

THE LIGHTER SIDE

by Kevin T. Walsh

I hope a few of you out there in aviation land enjoyed my previous airshow anecdotes. The following story is a personal favorite from my years of airshow production experience.

The **London International Air Show**, June 1996, London, Ontario, Canada – In 1996, the London Air Show was privy to have seven participating nations from the European, North American and Australian continents. My story focuses on the visit by The Royal Australian Air Force (RAAF). In '96 the RAAF had a C-130H Hercules flying sorties on the North American continent around our air show time. As luck would have it, the Aussie C-130 schedule was clear for our weekend and agreed to participate at the London Air Show.

We had been forewarned about the Australian aircrew and the fun and havoc that they had reeked on their tour so far. Well, their antics began only hours after touching down at the airfield. That evening, like every other evening of the air show weekend, there was a social function for the visiting aircrew. The RAAF aircrew were noticeably absent that Friday night. Everyone figured they must have had an alternate game plan and didn't give it any more thought.

We arrived early at the airfield the next morning to discover that the Aussies truly had their own game plan. They had been busy the night before "zapping" other nations' aircraft. An aircraft is "zapped" when it unwittingly displays the logo from another squadron. The Aussies came prepared. Their squadron's logo decals were far from inconspicuous. The large fluorescent orange kangaroos measured two feet tall and a foot wide! The victim list read as follows: a German Air Force Tornado IDS, a USN TA-4J Skyhawk, a Belgium Air Force C-130H Hercules and a USAF F-15E Strike Eagle. All these birds were "zapped" with big, bright orange kangaroo stickers and of course the Australian aircrew denied having anything to do with it. Everyone wrote it off as good fun and the Saturday air show rolled without a hitch!

The RAAF Herc crew were mysteriously absent from the Saturday night function. Do you see a pattern developing? That's right, the next morning when we arrived at the airfield we saw the night time "zapping" had continued. The victim count now included a pair of USAF A-10 Thunderbolts, a USN T-45A Goshawk, RNAF F-16 Fighting Falcon, and numerous golf carts and service vehicles all sporting big bright kangaroo stickers! Again, the RAAF crew denied everything! The aircrews of the aircraft which got "zapped" felt that the Aussie's behavior should not go unpunished and a multi-national conspiracy quickly began. At the Sunday

social function the RAAF aircrew was finally in attendance but now the aircrews who got "zapped" were noticeably missing! They were busy on their own night mission of revenge. They just didn't want to "zap" the RAAF Herc; they wanted to prank it on a grandiose scale. The collective crews worked feverishly late into Sunday night and even the early morning hours of Monday. In the middle of the night, in a pitch black airfield, the aircrews gathered their rental cars, formed a circle around the RAAF Hercules and flipped on their headlights, illuminating the belly of the aircraft. Then this "revenge" crew took turns one by one masking a giant message on the RAAF Herc's belly using a barrage of tape products. (It should be noted that the crews were very careful to ensure that the tape was removable and the prank would not cause any damage to the Herc's paint finish.) Their plan was executed perfectly and the message on the belly was completely unnoticeable to the Aussie aircrew the next morning as they performed their walk-about of the aircraft. The Herc was readied for departure but wound up holding their take-off while the two "zapped" USAF A-10 Thunderbolts got airborne. The RAAF Herc got airborne shortly after the A-10s and at that point the A-10s requested a formation flyby with the Hercules. Each A-10 flanked a wingtip of the Herc and the formation flew directly overhead the airfield at an altitude of 3000 feet. On the ground the Dutch, Belgium, German and U.S. Air Force and Navy crews who had been "zapped" shook hands and congratulated each other enthusiastically on a well-executed prank. As the formation of the Herc and A-10s flew over you could clearly see the message taped on the entire belly of the RAAF Herc. It simply read ..."WE LOVE FAGS"... You see, the Royal Australian Air Force Hercules' next destination was San Francisco, California!

*** Authors' note:** Just as the good nature of the crews involved, the author hopes that the reader will take no offense or malicious intent by the story's content.

We Get Letters -

Andy Szerdi, Senior Life Member #1817, recently received the following letter. We knew you'd agree that he's a great tour guide! Good work, Andy!

November 9, 1998

Mr. Andrew Szerdi
Yankee Air Force Museum
P O Box 590
Belleville MI 48112-0590

Dear Mr. Szerdi,

On behalf of Tiger Cub Den #1, Pack 854, from Miller School in Canton, I would like to thank you for the wonderful tour you took us on last Saturday.

Your interesting stories and enthusiasm made for a great afternoon. The boys, and parents as well, thoroughly enjoyed your tour of the museum. Thanks again!

Sincerely,
Sue J. Hoffman
Tiger Coach, Den #1
Pack 854

Dear Mr. Harner;

I am a teacher from Royal Oak MI that attended your recent Founder's Day Open House. I commend you on a very well run day. After our hearty pancake breakfast, we were aided by your staff personnel. They were kind and friendly. Of course we are now saving our money for the big fly on your B – 17. Keep up the good work.....and tell your staff they did an incredible job.

Sincerely
Jerry Bratton
Troy, MI

"AND THEY ALWAYS COME THROUGH!"

Our annual Founders Day Dinner/Dance September 19, 1998 was again a smashing success. Once again teamwork makes the work fun and the loads lighter!

Our caterer Glenda Hodges performed her usual magic with Yvonne Harner choosing our menu. Our band *"One Beat Back!"* made those familiar tunes memories again. As per many members suggestions we have them scheduled again for September 25, 1999.

Our annual Founders Day and Dinner/Dance was made a success with all the YAF members chipping in and lending a hand. Leading the workers' line-up was our own John Day & "The Jailer". Hot Air Balloon Captain Ed Dotson. President Donald G. Harner, the full Security crew. Bartenders: Chris Miranda, Jerry Curtis, Tim Durant (who came in from Battle Creek), and Dan Tomczak. Cashiers: Nina Smith and Mark Gadzinski. Decorators: Kathy Rodgers and Yvonne Harner.

Set up/clean up was managed by John Day, Don and Yvonne Harner, Todd Hackbarth, Mel Pomerantz, J.D. Hill, Scott Smith, Frank Nagy, Tim Durant, The whole on-site Northeast Division and Amanda, Bob Bomar, Bill and Rena Lary who came from Georgia just to help out, Aaron Peters, "Gunner", Mike Wisnewski, Linda Harrison, Debbie and Dick Stewart and the whole family, plus to-be family, Henry Bornholdt, Larry Redmond, Grant, Joe Kosek, Fred Lockwood, and we pried Dick away from the Lodestar, too.

This is your event and you made it a winner once again. With teamwork like this, how can we miss!! It makes me proud to be a member.

Nancy Lockwood – Treasurer

Answer to "What Kind of Plane is This?"
LOCKHEED C-121 "CONSTELLATION"

Wingspan: 126'2" Length: 116'2"
Cruising Speed: 240 mph Range: 4,000 miles
Engines: 4 Wright R-3350s / 3400 hp each

DIVISION NEWS -

Editors' note: A request was sent to all division Chairman for information they would like to put in the newsletter. We heard only from the Wurtsmith Division.

Wurtsmith Division
Yankee Air Force
Oscoda, MI

Greetings from Wurtsmith Division! We have just completed our second season of the Museum being open to the public . It was quite successful, with more than 3000 visitors from 25 states and 7 foreign countries.

We will also complete our fifth year since being chartered on December 17, 1993. Our membership at last count was 122.

In Hangar #2, the L-19 has been stripped to the bare essentials, and Bruce Blair is ready to start re-skinning. Dave Esman and Bob Sanderson have got the T-33 about ready for re-assembly. It should be back together in 1999. Bill Erb has most of the framework of the CG-4A put together, and will be continuing when he returns from Florida in the Spring.

In the meantime, construction of the meeting room and offices upstairs is about completed, giving us two more rooms for museum displays downstairs. The winter and early spring will be spent in re-arranging old exhibits and adding new ones. We are also looking forward to acquiring an A-7 from Willow Run (?), and a DC-8 from Kitty Hawk.

Everyone is invited to attend our re-opening on May 15, 1999.

Jim McLaughlin
Chairman

Connie's Corner

CAMEO: Daryle (Darl) Watters, Yankee Air Force member; glider restoration. Darl's SILENT WINGS, SILENT AGONY, SILENT VICTORY, and SILENT HERO.

SILENT WINGS; Darl Watters was one of the first advanced/tactical glider instructors of WW II. He was chosen to train the majority of glider pilots who took American kids silently to war. When they went into battle, so did Darl as a pilot on D-Day flying a British Horsa glider and the invasion of Holland so called "Operation Market Garden" flying a GC-4A glider. The invasion was made famous by a novel and movie, "A Bridge Too Far". After successfully landing in enemy territory, but 25 miles away from the drop zone as flak cut the tow line, Darl became an infantry soldier heading back to his own troops, wounded, he was captured by German Paratroopers.

SILENT AGONY; The war for Darl Watters was over. His life was almost over. Wounded, starved, frozen and mistreated, he somehow survived the German POW system and the winter of 1944/45, the coldest in 100 years.

SILENT VICTORY; By February 1945, there was little food and no heat. Darl had just existed. Hitler ordered the POWs to be killed. Fortunately the guards did not obey the orders and in April the Russians arrived. Darl was flown out by B-17 and home to wife Jeanie.

SILENT HERO; Watters was the prime motivator in the Air Zoo's Waco CG-4A restoration in Kalamazoo, Michigan. Watters came to the Air Zoo's library in the fall of 1998 to donate a few glider photo shots from WW II. After talking a bit, Darl told the library director about a part of a glider in the Michigan U.P. "Would he be interested?" The rest is history. Through Darl's efforts to find parts for Kalamazoo, we at the Yankee Air Force benefited. We got started with a few leftovers from them for our own Waco CG-4A glider.

On June 6, 1998, a lot of those men who wore their wings with "G" for GUTS, came from all over the country at the Kalamazoo Aviation History Museum for the dedication and symposium about the CG-4AA. Darl got his wish...not to die in a "plywood coffin". Darl Watters is not ready to go just yet as the best is yet to come.

OVER THE FENCE

by J. D. Hill

I recently spent a day at a small airport in Pennsylvania. It was to me the experience I needed to renew my spirit and to remind me how lucky I am to be a part of the aviation and educational communities.

A small child was standing by the fence with his father watching a group of tail draggers taxi around while training some students. He had that look on his face that all of us probably had the first time we saw an airplane. He laughed and ran up to the fence, "Look, Dad, airplane!, airplane!" His father took him inside the fence and opened the family's Cessna 310 and place him in the seat. The father placed him in his lap and let his son pull on the control yoke as he laughed as loud as he could. He started to cry when his dad closed the aircraft up and locked the door, but even we can remember a flight that we wish didn't have to end.

There were lots of students on the ramp with that "here we go" look on their face we all had in our flying experience; that look of wonder.

The thing I noticed is we did real pre-flights. They took their time and checked all those little things

some of us have come to brush over. They walk around slowly looking at every last item on the list. Do you still do that? Do you remember how?

What I took away from this day was there are people that felt that we are some of the luckiest people on earth that we get to work and play around these wonders of the sky. And how lucky we are to get to be in an organization like this one. Do you remember when you felt that way? Maybe we should find a way to regain that spirit around here. We all had it at one time.

MIDNIGHT WIND

Around midnight, Monday December 7th, a wind reported to be 65 mph at Detroit Metro and Ypsilanti roared across Willow Run Airport. The wind did no damage to our hangar. All our static aircraft rode out the windstorm without damage or being moved.

However, our neighbor to the south, Signature, was not as lucky. They had five airplanes that were ripped from there tie-downs and flipped over on their backs. One of the planes was lifted and blown on top of the fuel truck. All five planes were destroyed, and there were another eight that suffered damage that could readily be seen.

VOLUNTEERS ARE NEEDED in the following departments: Housekeeping / Grounds Keepers Static Restoration / Secretarial and Office Staff / Public Relations / Museum Tour Guides / Hangar Restoration & Maintenance

FOR SALE OR TRADE !
The following items have been declared as surplus or not needed for our current activities:

1) Easels - wood, white 2) Assorted Wire
3) Slate Blackboards 4) Projection Screens
5) Miscellaneous Photographic Equipment

See **John Day, Hangar Coordinator** on Tuesday, Thursday, or Saturday 10 AM – 4 PM

The Museum would like to expand its display on the ***Tuskegee Airmen***. To do so we would like assistance in obtaining an African-American mannequin. We would also invite any member to assist us in expanding our ***Early Aviation*** display.
We have a very rare artifact from the 1929 Dornier DO-X Seaplane. To complement this, we would like to have a 1/72nd model of the aircraft. Any member wishing to help should contact **Roger Peterson** or **Henry Grudzien**.

THE EDITOR'S JOB

If we print jokes, people say we are silly,
If we don't they say we are too serious.
If we clip things from other magazines,
we are too lazy to write them ourselves,
If we don't , we are stuck on our own stuff.
If we don't print every word of all contributions
we don't appreciate genius,
If we do print them, the column is filled with junk.
If we change a contributor's story we are too critical,
If we don't, we're blamed for poor editing.
Now, like as not, somebody will say we swiped this from another publication. WE DID!

NEW MEMBERS AT WILLOW RUN

Howard Crowe * Mike Whitmore * Lou Hotton Dave Snyder * Peter Hartinger * Ralph Tuttle Phil Salata * Ron Garinther * Chris Felcyn * Stephen Kranz (Junior Member) * Don Qualls and Steve Qualls * Leo Link (Life Member) * Wilbur Haack * Gus Phillips

WHAT'S HAPPENING IN THE HANGAR by Daniel Tomczak

ICAS Visit

The International Council of Airshows (ICAS) hosts a annual convention which is dedicated to airshow production. Participants include airshow sponsors, airshow performers, and airshow venues looking for airplanes, and performers. This year four Yankee Air Force members, Norm Ellickson, Bill Rogers, Charlie Jackson, and Bill Lary, traveled to the convention in Las Vegas to represent the museum's flyable aircraft. There was a lot of interest in the museum's aircraft, and many good contacts were made. There was even a organization requesting the C-47 in Alaska! Overall, it was well worth the trip. This year should be a good year for the museum's flyable aircraft.

B-17 Co-op

The B-17 Co-op is a loose organization of all B-17 owners and operators. This year the Yankee Air Force Museum hosted the group at the Willow Run Hangar.

The meeting started Friday Oct. 30th with a tour of Jack Roush's extensive facilities. Then the group traveled to the Henry Ford Museum to see their collection of rare and historic aircraft. Finally the day was capped off with a fine dinner at a local restaurant.

The actual meeting was held on Saturday Oct. 31st in the hangar. Ten B-17s were represented. The meeting started with an update from each aircraft about their flying season, maintenance problems and other issues. The meeting continued with operational issues, This included check rides, type ratings, formation ratings, and historic flight experiences. The next issue to be covered was parts and equipment. All of the airplanes exchanged surplus parts and parts wanted lists. The manufacturing of new tires, nose glass, and a high temperature ring cowl gasket was discussed. Another parts issue was brake pucks which are becoming hard to find.

Educational out-reach programs were the next topic. This issue is very important to the Yankee Air Force Museum because the museum staff are developing a new educational program.

The artifacts of the National Air and Space Museum came up as a discussion topic. A few years ago the co-op visited the National Air and Space Museum and were appalled at the lack of restoration and preservation of historic artifacts. Unfortunately very little progress have made since the visit. It is too bad because many one of a kind aircraft are corroding into dust.

The meeting concluded with a tour of the museum, and aircraft. The next meeting is scheduled for November 1999. Overall it was a very successful meeting and a good time was had by all.

Polishing Party !

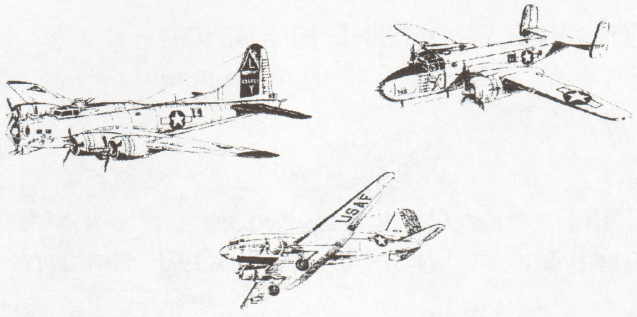
Everyone is welcome! Help polish the Yankee Air Force B-17 "*Yankee Lady*", our C-47, and B-25.

When: Saturday, March 20, 1999

Where: YAF Hangar at Willow Run Airport

Time: Polishing starts at 9:00 AM

Hope to see you there!!



FLYABLE AIRCRAFT POLISHING PARTY

At airshows many people comment on how clean and shiny the Yankee Air Force aircraft look. People ask if the airplanes have been re-skinned with new metal. The airshow visitors are amazed when they find out the aircraft have their original metal and are hand polished by many volunteers. You can help the aircraft look great for the 1999 airshow season by participating in the 3rd Annual Flyable Aircraft Polishing Party. It will be held on March 20, 1999 starting at 9:00 AM. All volunteers are welcome to lend a hand in polishing the B-17, B-25, and C-47. Previous years saw the participation of many people, including a group of Cub Scouts, Yankee Air Force members and friends, and even some visitors who just happened be touring the museum.

Please bring in at least 5 clean soft cotton cloths to apply the polish and buff the finish (there can never be enough clean cloths). The airplane will be hand polished with Mothers Mag & Aluminum Polish. The museum has a supply of left over from last year's polishing party, so it is not necessary to purchase the polish, but volunteers are encouraged to bring in additional supplies of Mothers Mag & Aluminum Polish. (The polish can be purchased at Murray's Auto Parts stores, and discount stores such as K-Mart, Meijer, and Target)

Lunch will be provided by the museum to all workers. Hopefully this year the weather will cooperate, but in the event of very cold or bad weather the polishing party will be moved to March 27th.

The polishing party is a lot of fun. It is a great chance to meet museum members and become involved with the museum. Everybody is welcome. If you have any questions, contact Dan Tomczak at the museum or (734) 769-6866, or e-mail: dtomczak@ampsys.com

FABRIC RECOVERY CLASS

Have you ever wanted to learn how to recover the fabric control surfaces of airplanes? A hands-on class will be held in the "Skonk Works" room in the Willow Run hangar. A team of volunteers headed by Bill Rogers will be demonstrating the fine art of fabric recovering on the Waco CG-4A glider control surfaces. The hands on classes include cutting the fabric, doping, sewing, and painting. The classes will be held every Saturday from January through completion sometime in the spring.

DC-6 RESTORATION

George Clarke has become the new crew chief of the DC-6. He is taking over the aircraft from Roger Peterson. George has a plan to restore the DC-6. Presently two of his projects are the recovering of the rudder, and bird-proofing the aircraft. A aircraft bird-proofing day will be held this spring. More details will follow as more information becomes available.

BOARD OF GOVERNORS VACANCY

The is an opening for a seat on the National Board of Governors. This seat is the remainder of John Day's term which runs through December 1999. John Day has been elected to the position of Vice - President of the Yankee Air Force. The seat will be filled at the January Board meeting from all nominated candidates by the current Board. All qualified members in good standing are eligible to apply. Interested people should apply in writing to the National Secretary of the Yankee Air Force as soon as possible.

AIR MOBILITY COMMAND MUSEUM

by Daniel Tomczak

I recently had the opportunity to visit the Air Mobility Command Museum which is located in Dover Delaware. It is part of the U.S. Air Force Museum organization. The displays represent aircraft that operated out of Dover Air Force Base. The museum has an extensive collection of aircraft and displays. Aircraft in their collection include: a C-47 that flew in the D-day invasion (YAF's pilot Dick Bodycombe flew this aircraft after the war), P-51 painted in Tuskegee Airmen colors, B-17 painted in the 381 Bomb Group, a C-45 twin Beech, BT-13, Stearman biplane, AT-6, C-54 which flew in the Berlin airlift, C-7, C-123, C-141, F-106, T-33, C-121 (under restoration), and many other aircraft and helicopters. What makes this museum special is the displays. The museum has excellent displays of the Berlin Airlift, and transport operations. They also have very good displays of the Tuskegee Airmen activities, Dover Air Force base during W.W.II as a rocket research center and a ball turret which is cut in half, showing how a gunner fit inside the turret.

The museum is well worth the trip.

The **305th Bombardment Group** Memorial Association (World War II) recently had a reunion October 7-10, 1998, in Dearborn. Many of the members took a tour of the Yankee Air Museum. The membership will be pleased to hear that we have received comments such as "There isn't a better display of artifacts and mementos anywhere." The 305th's next reunion is September 29 – October 3, 1999, in Tacoma, Washington. If you're interested, the contact person is Ridgely D. Kemp, 572 Fairway Drive, Novato, CA 94949, telephone: (419) 883-5792.

THANKS FROM THE ELECTION COMMITTEE

by Al Scotford

The Election Committee would like to thank everyone that helped with the YAF elections.

The committee consisted of Chairman Robert Dubler, Barbara Dubler who typed many of the forms, Leslie and Margo Farr, Alexander Scotford and John Walsh. Later we had the help of Mrs. Walsh in the preparation of the envelopes for mailing. During the counting of the ballots there were others who helped during that part of the election but I didn't get their names.

Also, we would like to thank ZIP Printing on Southfield Road in Lathrup Village for their printing of the envelopes. The complete election came in under budget due to the excellent services we received from our suppliers.

We would also like to thank the people who took the time to vote.

Once again, THANKS TO ALL OF YOU.

EAT AT BILL KNAPP'S - Raise Money for the YAF!
When you make a purchase at any Bill Knapp's restaurant, you can receive vouchers for the dollars you spend. If you would like to participate in the *Bill Knapp's Community Support Program,* visit any Bill Knapp's restaurant in Michigan and ask for Community Support Vouchers upon paying your bill. This applies to all purchases at Bill Knapp's, dine-in or take-out!

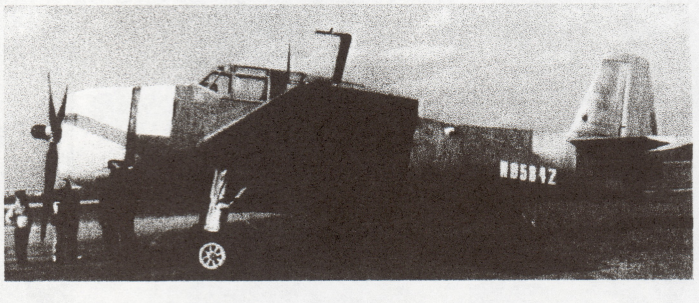
SOME PHOTOGRAPHS OF WHAT HAS BEEN HAPPENIN' AROUND THE HANGAR.

SECOND CHILDHOOD?

Our outgoing President astride a 1932 Harley Davidson motorcycle owned by Stan Wallis. Don, in earlier days, owned a 1931 Harley. Who would have believed that this dapper gentleman was a "Hog Driver"?

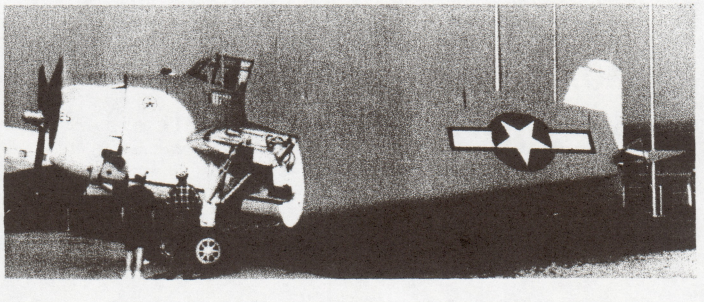
Photo by Bob Seaton

Do you recognize this person? The answer will appear in next months issue. If you know who it is you will not win a prize. We will however be in awe of your ability!



A TBM "Avenger" owned by Doc Tinker of Monroe was parked on our ramp prior to going to Ontario for a paint job.

Photo by Norm Jones



Another TBM, owned by Stephen & Phyllis Hay of Goshen Indiana, visited us for Founders Day. Mr. Hay is a YAF member-GN 05713 WR.

Photo by Norm Jones

Another look at some of the destruction caused by the "Midnight Wind."

Photo by Bob Seaton

Miles O' Pennies for the YAF Building Fund

DON'T FORGET!

Support the MILES - O - PENNIES

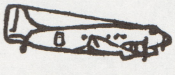
YOUR

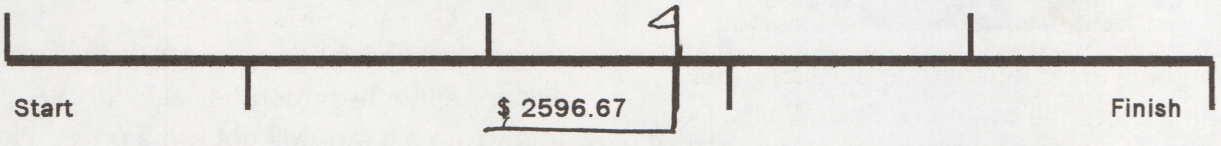
HELP

IS NEEDED

THANK YOU!

Stella Grudzien, Andrew Maciag,
Bob Jones, Bill Hanney, Joe Kosek,
Bill Colwell, Dean Greene.





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